

**Claims**

1. A Hp-Hb complex (haptoglobin-haemoglobin complex) or a part thereof or a mimic thereof being operably linked to a substance, wherein the Hp-Hb complex or the part thereof or the mimic thereof is capable of binding a CD163 receptor and/or a CD163 receptor variant.
2. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 1, in a purified form.
3. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 1, in an isolated form.
4. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 1, wherein the complex is dimeric.
5. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 1, wherein the complex is multimeric.
6. The Hp-Hb part or mimic according to claim 1, capable of binding to a region in one or more of the SRCR domains I-IX of the CD163 receptor.
7. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 1, wherein the substance comprises a medicament.
8. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 7, wherein the medicament is selected from antibiotics and anticancer drugs.
9. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 7, wherein the medicament is selected from anti-HIV drugs.
10. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 1, wherein the substance comprises a gene.
11. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 10, wherein the gene comprises a nucleic acid, such as PNA, LNA, DNA or RNA.
12. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 10, wherein the gene comprises cDNA.

13. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 10, wherein the gene is encoding CD163.
- 5 14. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 1, wherein the substance comprises an antibody or an antigen.
- 15 15. The Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to any of the claims 1-14, wherein the substance comprises a tracer or a marker.
- 10 16. The Hp-Hb as mimic, according to any of the claims, wherein the mimic is an antibody.
- 15 17. A method of treatment of an individual comprising administration of the Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof according to claim 1, the method comprising the steps of:
- iv) providing a Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof as defined in claim 1 capable of binding to the CD163 variant,
- 20 v) operably linking a substance as defined in the claims 1-16 to the Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof,
- vi) administering the substance operably linked to the Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof to an individual in need thereof.
- 25 18. A composition comprising a Hp-Hb complex, or a part thereof, or a mimic thereof as defined in claim 1.
- 30 19. A CD163 variant capable of binding at least one haptoglobin-haemoglobin (Hp-Hb) complex.
20. The CD163 variant according to claim 19, wherein the at least one Hp-Hb complex is dimeric.
- 35 21. The CD163 variant according to claim 19, wherein the at least one Hp-Hb complex is multimeric.
22. The CD163 variant according to claim 19, comprising the SRCR domains I-IX of the CD 163 receptor, or a variant thereof.

23. The CD163 variant according to claim 22, comprising at least the Hp-Hb binding region.
24. The CD163 variant according to claim 19, wherein the binding affinity has a  $K_d$  of 100  
5 nM or less.
25. The CD163 variant according to claim 19, wherein the binding affinity has a  $K_d$  of 10 nM  
or less.
- 10 26. A CD163 variant according to claim 19, which is soluble
27. A medicament comprising the CD163 variant as defined in claim 18.
28. A method of treatment of an individual comprising administration of a CD163 variant  
15 according to any of claims 19 to 26.
29. The method according to claim 17, wherein the method comprises drug-delivery treat-  
ment of an individual in need of such treatment.
- 20 30. The method according to claim 17, wherein the method comprises gene delivery treat-  
ment of an individual in need of such treatment.
31. The method according to claim 17 or 28, wherein the method comprises treatment of  
25 haemolysis in an individual in need of such treatment.
32. A diagnostic composition comprising a CD 163 variant as defined in claim 19.
33. The composition according to claim 32, said CD163 being expressed by a cell said  
method comprising administrating a Hp-Hb complex operably linked to a marker for  
30 marking the CD163 representing cell.
34. The composition according to claim 33, for identifying macrophages in a biological sam-  
ple from an individual.
- 35 35. A composition comprising at least one purified CD163 receptor and/or at least one puri-  
fied CD163 variant as defined in claim 19.
36. A method for diagnosing a pathological condition comprising administrating a composi-  
tion as defined in claim 35.